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REMARKS

Applicants submit a Petition and Fee for a One-Month Extension of Time.

An excess claim fee payment letter is submitted herewith for one (1) additional independent claim.

Claims 1, 4-5, 7-23, and 25-27 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 7-9, and 20 are amended to more clearly define the invention and claim 6 is canceled. Claims 1, 7-8, 11, 14, and 16-20 are independent.

These amendments are made only to more particularly point out the invention for the Examiner and not for narrowing the scope of the claims or for any reason related to a statutory requirement for patentability.

Applicants also note that, notwithstanding any claim amendments herein or later during prosecution, Applicants' intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements.

Entry of this §1.116 Amendment is proper. Since the Amendments above narrow the issues for appeal and since such features and their distinctions over the prior art of record were discussed earlier, such amendments do not raise a new issue requiring a further search and/or consideration by the Examiner. As such, entry of this Amendment is believed proper and Applicant earnestly solicits entry. No new matter has been added.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 1, 4-5, 11-23, and 25-27 are allowed. However, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims are allowable.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 7-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. This Amendment cancels claim 6 and rewrites claims 7-8 into

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independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims to place claims 7-9 into condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 4-5, 7-23, and 25-27, all the claims presently pending in the Application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.


Should the Examiner find the Application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

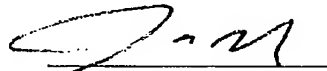
Date: 8/5/05

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CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that I am filing this Amendment Under 37 CFR §1.116 by facsimile with the United States Patent and Trademark Office to Examiner Kathleen J. Prunner, Group Art Unit 3751 at fax number (571) 273-8300 this 5th day of August, 2005.



James E. Howard
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